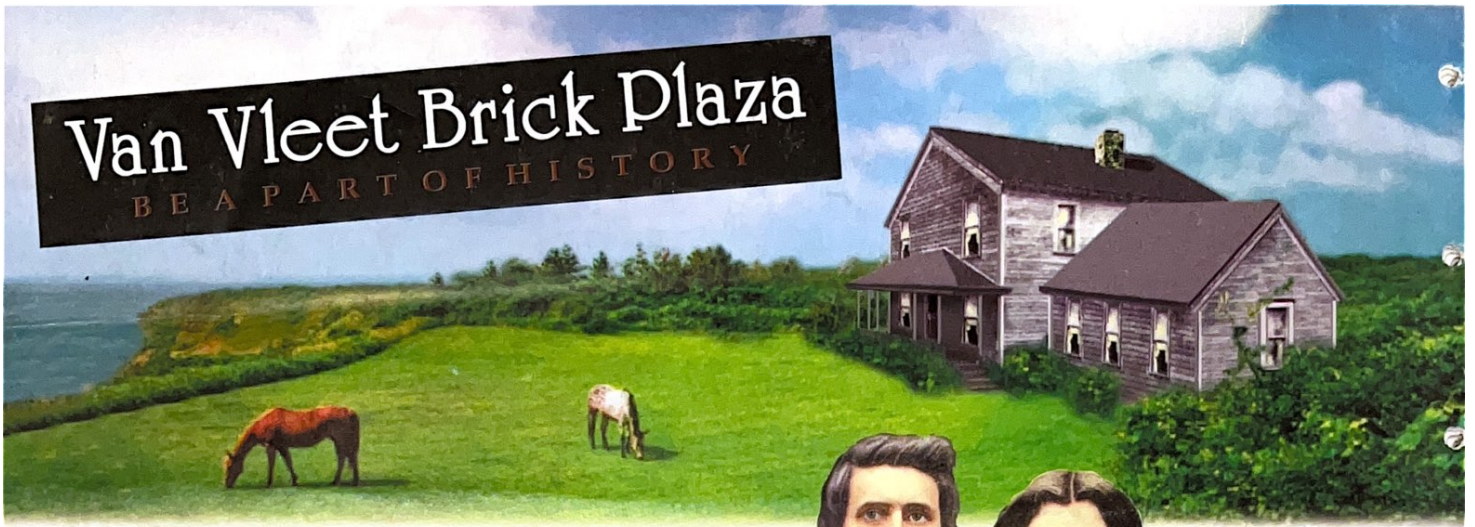


Van Vleet Brick Plaza

BE A PART OF HISTORY



David C. Parker, First Settler in East Clark County

Lewis Van Vleet, Parkersville Developer



Lewis Van Vleet and wife
Elisabeth Coffey-Van Vleet

In 1976 the Van Vleet property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and was named Parkersville Historic Site in honor of David C. Parker who in 1845 was the first permanent American pioneer settler in East Clark County. The platted township of Parkersville lies adjunct to the historic site. Mr. Parker built a dock on the river which became known as Parker's Landing from which he operated a ferry.

Upon Mr. Parker's death in 1858, Lewis Van Vleet, a U. S. Deputy Surveyor and Clark County Representative in the Territorial Senate, bought part of Parker's land after administering Parker's estate. Van Vleet operated Parker's ferry business and developed Parkersville in the 1870s. Because the river was the main source of transportation, Parker's Landing turned Parkersville into the hub of East Clark County.

Parkersville grew until the landing Parker built became too small for big stern wheelers and the increasing river traffic. In 1880 Washougal was founded and businesses moved to the new town leaving Parkersville to become deserted.

Attracted by the now quiet landing, Lewis Van Vleet's daughter Louisa moved to Parkersville in the early 1900s. Louisa Spicer-Wright, one of the first women doctors in the Washington Territory, lived in the Parker homestead until her death in 1913. Dr. Louisa Wright's son Cecil and his wife Elsie arrived in 1920. Cecil, born a Spicer, had legally taken Van Vleet as his last name having fallen out with his father and spent much of his young years with his grandparents. A number of years after Elsie died, Cecil remarried. In 1968 Cecil and Mary sold the property to the Port of Camas/Washougal with the hope that it would become a park. Cecil Van Vleet remained on the property until his death in 1977. Mary moved the following year to Vancouver, Washington.

Preservation and development of this National Historic Site has succeeded through the sustained efforts of community people of Camas and Washougal, the Heritage Trust of Clark County, and the Camas-Washougal Historical Society in cooperation with the Port of Camas/Washougal. You are invited to support the development of this site and to become a part of local history by ordering your brick or bricks.

Parkersville Heritage Foundation
P. O. Box 567, Camas, WA 98607

